Abstract of the Disclosure

An e-mail filtering method and system that categorizes received e-mail messages based on information about the origin, such as the sender sending the message or the site from where the message was sent, which is contained in the message header and the SMTP session used to send the message. This data, whether the sender is familiar to the receiver, and other information about the message is then sent by each member of an e-mail network to one or more central databases (in one embodiment, the information will also be stored at a database associated with the recipient's e-mail program and filtering software) which stores the information and compiles statistics about e-mails sent from the origin to indicate the likelihood that the e-mail is unsolicited and determine the reputation of the origin (a good reputation indicates the sender sends solicited messages while a bad reputation indicates the sender sends unsolicited e-mail messages). Information from the central database is then sent to recipients in order to determine the likelihood that a received e-mail message is spam (information may also be obtained from the local database associated with the recipient's e-mail program and filtering software).

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